Project I.D. No.

NAME: Akamine, Kosei (GEORGE) DATE OF BIRTH: 1905 PLACE OF BIRTH: Okinawa
Age: 70 Sex: M Marital Status: W Education: High School & Pacific Union Col. (Seminary)

PRE-WAR:
Date of arrival in U.S.: 1921 Age: 16 M.S. Y.Y. Port of entry: Hawaii
Occupation/s: 1. Sugar Cane Plantation Worker 2. School Boy 3. Restaurant owner/operator
Place of residence: 1. Hawaii Island 2. Honolulu 3. San Francisco, Ca. 4. Los Angeles 5. Came back to SF
Religious affiliation: Christian Church
Community organizations/activities: Japanese Association & "Heimusha Kai" Association

EVACUATION:
Name of assembly center: Hanford (2/42) & Fresno Assembly Center (5/42)
Name of relocation center: Jerome, Arkansas (10/42)
Dispensation of property: Restaurant - sold Names of bank/s:
Jobs held in camp: 1. Teacher 2.
Jobs held outside of camp: Factory worker
Left camp to go to: Detroit, Michigan (In 1944)

POST-WAR:
Date returned to West Coast: Summer 1946
Address/es: 1. Detroit, Michigan (2 yrs) 2. San Francisco, Ca. 3. Monterey, California
Religious affiliation: Christian Church
Activities: 1. Japanese Christian Association 3.
If deceased, date, place and age at time of death:

Name of interviewer: Toshi Kusunoki Date: 2/10/75 Place: Monterey, Ca.
Translators: Carter & Takahashi

NAME: Kosei Akamine

AGE: 70 years old

DATE OF BIRTH: 1905

PLACE OF BIRTH: Okinawa

YEAR OF ENTRY INTO THE USA: 1921 (16 years old)

OCCUPATION: Restaurant, grocery, art shop ?

Camp: Jerome, Arkansus

Date of Interview: Feb. 10, 1975

Place of Interview: Monterey

Interviewer: Toshi Kusunoki

Translator: Heihachiro Takarabe

Q: Lets start with your name, please.
A:
A: My name is Akamine, Akamine Kosei.

Q: What characters do you use in your name?

A: "Aka" as in this stroke and Mine as in "Yamamine".

Q: And your first name?

A: Kosei, "saiwai" or happiness and Nari as in Yukinari.

Q: What country are you from?

A: I'm from Okinawa.

Q: I haven't met many Okinawans here.

A: No, but there are many Okinawans in Hawaii.

Q: Really?

A: There's too many.

Q: Where in Okinawa did you come from?

A: Before the war, I lived in the suburbs. Now it is called Naha city.

Q: The Capital city?

A: Yes, Naha city, Aza and Oroku.

Q: When were you born? In what year?

A; In the year "38", which will make me about 70 years old.

Q: Do you mean 1938?

A: No, I mean 38th year in the Meiji Era.

Q: That will be around 1900?

A: That will be 1905.

Q: Now lets talk about Okinawa around the year 1905. Do you remember any of your childhood experiences? Like the Russian and Japanese war or the Japanese and Chinese war?

A: I don't remember the Russian and Japanese War.

Q: Were you in Hawaii during WW I?

A: Yes.

Q: How was it like in Okinawa when you were a child? Waht What was it like?

A: We lived a poor life. My family was farmers.

Q: What crops did you grow?

A: Sugar and broomcorn. At our farm around July or August we would go harvest the broomcorn and make a traditional broomcorn cake to present to the dead ancestor. This day was our holiday. We displayed this cake for about a week or so. That is what we grew broom corn for. And the crops we sold at the store. We had sweet potatoes, horse-radishes and other vegetables.

Q: That was Okinawa about 50 years ago?

A: Yes.

Q: About 1971, I went to Okinawa for Japanese Christian Association and visited Many churches there.

A: So you went to Okinawa.

Q: Yes, I went from Naka to Takejima.

A: About what year?

Q: Around 1970 - 1971, but I am sure it was in '71.

A: Do you remember a lady evangelist?

Q: In Okinawa?

A: Yes, she was born in Kyushu, Japan, but was raised in Okinawa. I cannot recall her name.

Q: Did you have any happy memories of your childhood?

A: We were close to the ocean, we went swimming, fishing, and hunting. I enjoyed that the most. We also divided into teams and played with a ball made out of clay.

Q: HOw far in school did you get to in Naha?

A: When I entered middle school I was called to come to Hawaii when I was about 16. I never had a chance to attend a Japanese school. The immigration law was being changed in 1924, so my parents wanted me to come over to Hawaii before the deadline. So I never really finished sch-ol in Okinawa.

Q: Tell me about your parents?

A: My parents came to Hawaii as immigrants. They came to the place called "Whykeyada" an island and worked cutting cains. There were very few people who were share croppers. They all worked for sugar companies and worked in fields. They were just farm workers.

Q: Were your parents been in Hawaii long time?

A: No, I don't think so. They worked there for over 10 years. My parent went to Hawaii while I was still a taddler. I was raised by my grand parents. We had lots of aunts and uncles.

Q: How about your brothers and sisters?

A: I have two. One of them was born in Hawaii and he is teaching in Hawaii. He was sent to an island in the Wouth Pacific to study soil by the University of Hawaii. This is my younger brother. My other brother was in Okinawa, but died during the W.W. II.

Q: How was the trip to Hawaii?

A: We came on the ship by the name of Siberia Maru. I got sea sick. It must have taken over 10 days. It must have been 1 or 2 am when the ship left Naha. It arrived Kagoshima about the same time on the next day. Then the ship came to Kobe. It arrived in the afternoon. When we arrived in Kobe a hotel clerk came to meet us. He was sent by a hotel called Ebisuya. It was owned by

an Okinawan. Then we stayed there for 10 days. Then we came to Yokohama in the afternoon. We just stayed on the ship in Yokohama. We just had only 2 hours. Then we came to Hawaii straight.

Q: How was the relationship between Okinawa and Japanese government?

A: Well, I don't think there was anything speciall, however, Iremember hearing that Okinawa was taxed havily on the i inported goods.

Q: Then Okinawa was already a part of Japan.

A: Yes, I think so. It was from from the begining of Meiji period that Okinawa became a part of Japan. We were oppressed by Satsuma Han (Lord Shimazu's government before Meiji period). Okinawa was very prosperous before it was governed by Satsuma Han. Everyone lived a good life there. At that time Japan had not started traiding with China, yet. However, Okinawa was already traiding with China and was very prosperous economicly. Then Satsuma came to govern us and we were oppressed by them. So the Okinawans lost incentive to work because they were heavily taxed and lost hope for their future. They say that in Okinawa women work very hard, but men are lazy. From that time on men learned to play Zamisen (Okinawan string instrument) and played around.

Q: Did you come on the Siberia Maru by yourself?

A: Yes. There were many people on the ship. There were many women on the ship, too. You see, the immigration law was going to be tightened and no one could come over afterwards. So the single men who were in the States started calling their wives all of sudden. There were many of those women who went to Hawaii.

Q: Do you remember any thing happened on the ship?

A: No, I don't remember anything special. It was the first time for me to take such a long trip, so I was very lonesome. When I climbed up on the deck, the only thing I could see was water and sky. The ship was roling and I had no enjoyment. I only wished that the ship arrives at Hawaii quickly.

Q: Did you make any friends on the ship?

A: No. I didn't especially.

Q: When you arrived at Hawaii, what happen?

A: My father came to pick me up.

Q: How did you feel?

A: First, we were sent to the Immigration Office, and then we were examined. Then we got OK. The thing that was encouraging and gave me a peace of mind was that there was a couple who was going back to Hawaii. They knew my parents very well. They took me around the Island. You see I never had ice cream before. They treated me to ice cream

for the first time in my life. We did have "Ramune" (soda water) and shaved ice over Azuki(sweet red beans). However, I don;t think we had ice cream in Okinawa. At least it was the first time for me in Hawaii.

Q: How was your first impression of Hawaii.

A: Yes. I stayed in Honolulu for a week. The first and the deepest impression was that the white women were driving cars. The other thing that I was very impressed was that in Hawaii everything was open. You see, Hawaii was very warm, and the cars and houses were wide open. I felt that Hawaii was in summer season all the year around.

Q: Naha, Okinawa must be a warm place, too.

A: Yes, it is. However, it was not like there in Hawaii. Then, we went to Hawaii Island. My father was working for a plantation. There must have been 20 families and 100 workers resided in a camp of the plantation. This house was built by the plantation owner. All these 100 people were from Japan, Issei. I don't think there are many of them alive today. In Hawaii, I was still a small boy and I did not receive a very good impression. My father used to take picture of Hawaii and sent it to us to Okinawa. I used to think that work over there must be a clean and nice job. However, when I came to Hawaii, I saw the reality. There was a great big difference between the picture and the real situation. I was very disappointed. I used to think that people in Hawawi must have easy jobs and living very confortably. It rained almost everyday

there. If you look at diffe

there. If you look at it from a different point of view you might say that sugar cains grew very well because of the rain.

I worked there for almost 4 months in the plantation. Then I went to Honolulu and went to school, doing a school boy work.

Q: What was your mother doing in the plantation? Was she working, too?

A: My mother? Yes, by the time I went there, my brother was already 11 or 12, and she had small children, so she was not working. However, those women who did not have children worked in the cain fields. At that time we received $2.00 per day. We worked 10 hours a day. In Okinawa it was only 50¢ for a whole day's work.

Q: I would like to know more about the working condition in the plantation.

A: We got up about 5:00 in the morning and went out to work around 6:00 am. You see, we had to take a train and if we missed the train, we could not go to work. It rained so hard that we didn't have to wash nor change cloth often. It was just once a week. If you get wet, you just hung your cloth on a wall to dry it. Even if it was wet, we had to ware it next morning. It's because it rained everyday, so we could not change our cloth often. So it was very cold in the morning in the winter. We were

shivering. Sometimes rain got into our Bento(lunch packed in a box). We had to eat rain soaked lunch sometimes. In Hawaii, they say even if you forget your lunch, you cannot forgt your rain gear.

Q: How comfortable was your living there?

A: It was not very good. I thought it was a little more civilized in Hawaii, but it was terrible. We did eat better, though. Houses were bungalows built by the plantation owner. It was just like those of army barracks. It had not provisions. It had a bedroom and kitchen. Toilet was a very primitive one. Some one had to clean the toilet. It was his fultime job. It was very primitive.

Q: How about Ofuro(Japanese Bath)?

A: Yes. Somebody gets the bath ready by 4:00pm. Men got in the bath first, then the women. Everybody tookbath everyday. We needed it. You see, because we were drenched everyday.

Q: You stayed there for 4 months, then you went out to Honolulu, right?

A: Yes. I felt that I needed to study. You see, I did not go to school in Okinawa very much, only elementary school. So I went to Honolulu after 4 months and went to school. It was an English school for Japanese students. It was sponsored by Episcopal church. People who came from Okinawa and main land Japan went to this school.

Then I found a job as a school boy. I went there long time. There were about 20 students. It must have been about 6 hours of studies. We studied not only English but also other subjects as well.

Q: What was your favarit subjects?

A: Well, I didn't have any. Except that I knew I had to study English very hard, such as reading and convasation. If I were to live in this country, I had to know English.

Q: Do you remember anythin g from this school time?

A: Let's see. I can't recall anything from the classroom, but they used to have a lot of picnic. Even one for lunch time. Because it was very warm in Hawaii, all the year around, so they even got together in the evening. We got together and make a barnfire and cooked meat or winners. These things were the most enjoyable thing while I was there.

Q: Did you have much communication with you parents?

A: You see, while I was there in order to go to go to Hawaii Island, I had to leave Honolulu in the afternoon on a ship, I would not reach Hawaii Island before 6:00am on the next day. Now they say there is no ferry anymore. They all use airplain now. It was not every year, but every other year that I was able to visit my parents.

Q: How long did you attend the school?

A: I went to a grammer school, hight school and then I also attended a Bible school for 2 years. So I must have attened school quite a long time.

Q: I would like to go back a little. What was the religion of your family?

A: It was an ancestral worship. It might be similar to Shinshu Buddhism.

Q: Then by the time you came to Hawaii you knew something about Christianity.

A: When I came to Hawaii and attended the school, I went to church on Sunday mornings.

Q: Did you know anything about Christianity before?

A: No. I did not know anyting about Christianity while I was in Okinawa. However, I remember family that there was a teacher who belong to a cirtain denomination of Chrisitan faith. Christianity was not encouraged there. Because they said that this religion was different from the others. The people of village did not associate with them closely. People did not think well of Christianity then.

However, when I came to Hawaii and began to attend the school, I began to attend the worship. It was the school sponsored by Episcoparian church. It had a Japanese minister, Rev. Fukao. He must be gone by now. We were

tought by him. This church was a Japanese church. There were about 20 members. It was the first time for me to go to church.

Q: When did you ge marry?

A: I got married in 1939.

Q: You got married in Hawaii?

A: No. After I came to the main land. You see, after I graduated from the school at Episcoparian church, I went to the school at Yora (a private school). I attended it for 2 years. Then I went to Mackinley High School, a public school, for 2 years. Then I entered a Bible school. It must have been about 2 years. The reason why I went to the Bible school was that the minister of the church I attended was a man from Okinawa Ken. He advised me to become an evangelist. That's why I went to the Bible Schoo. However, at the end of the 2nd year the Bible school went bankrupt because of the lack of student and so the lack of fund. Then I went back to the Mackinley High School. There were 3 Okinawan students in the high school. Two of them became ministers. They were retired now in Hawaii. One's name was Chinen and the other Oyakawa.

Then I came to the mainland around 1929. Immigrants could not come. The only ones who caould come were students and merchants and entertainers. It's only after the war that we can come and go freely from Hawaii.

Until then we could not come over freely. I had to go to the Immigration Office and was investigated. They asked me whom I was going to get intouch with, or how much money I had and others. I officially entered the Pacific Union College in Napa County. It was a seminary. I was there for about a half year. I was very lonesome. It was situated in thedeep mountain. I just could not stay there any longer, so I came out to San Francisco. Do you know Rev. Isamu Nakamura, who had passed away about 3 months ago? He was in Long Beach, before that he was in Cortez and before that he was in Sacramento? He was there at the same time. He tired to persuade me to stay there.

My parents were against my decision to go to the seminary. So I had to earn my living to go to the school. They were against me becoming a Christian. You see, they were people of the old era and did not understand Christianity. They were definitely agaisnt this.

Then I came out to San Francisco. I found a job in San Francisco and went to school, too. However, most of the job available in San Francisco was a domestic job. I advatized on ta newspaper that I wanted a job as a school boy. Then I had a call. The caller asked me if I knew how to cook. If I said, I can't, then I couldn't get the job. It was repeated many times. Even if I found a job, then they found out that I couldn't cook, I was denyed of the job at the door. It seems now as if it was

a dream. It was embarrassing to have the door slammed right infront of you, who was still holding a suitcase. I was declined of a job so many times, that I had to tell them that I have not been cooking, but I know how to cook, and got a job. Eventually, I began to understand how to cook and the rest of the routine.

You see, those people wanted to have someone who can cook. At that time there was a depression and I just could not get any job. So my impression of San Francisco was not very good.

In Hawaii it had a warm whether all the year around. People were also warm, too. However, people in San Francisco were very cold. So I had a very rough time.

At the Pacific Union College they tought other subjects than theology and the Bible, too. For example there were economics, political science, medicine and dentistry, social science and others. There was a woman from Japan, too.

Q: You entered a Christian College agaisnt your parents wish. Why?

A: Well, there were many Okinawans in Hawaii. The largest number of people must be from Hiroshima Ken, then Okinawans come the second. In any case the minister from Okinawa by the name of Higa advised me to become a minister. He

said we need to lead Okinawans to Christ. "There are so many Okinawans here and there, and they need to have a leader and pastor. I want you to become that person." I did go to church and was tithing. Church life was very important for me, then.

By the way, do you know Rev. Suyehiro? His church was supporsed to be the biggest church in Los Angeles. He and I attended the same church in Hawaii. From that time on, he comes to see me every time he gets a chance. He was very much influenced by Rev. Kagawa. He was a very enthusiastic person. When Kagawa came to Hawaii, this Rev. Suyehiro (helped him.) He was a kind of person who cut a tip of his finger to write letters of his decisions. There was a minster who went to Japan to teach at a girls' school, yes, it was Rev. Ito. He spoke at Rev. Suyehiro's church. The reason why I know that Rev. Ito visited him was that I still receive weekly bulletin from Japan. According to Rev. Ito, Rev. Suyehiro's church is one of the largest church.

One of the reason why my parents opposed me to become an evangelist was that because they did not understand Chrsitianity and also they were Buddhists.

My brother graduated from Hawaii Univ.. He was a very faithful member of a Christian church. His wife is from a very fine Christian family. His wife comes from aplace

called Dahaina. Her father was an elder of a church. Her mother's elder sister was the wife of Rev. Chinen. The next sister is a nurse, and then other one is a principle of a school. Next one is my brother's wife. She was teaching parmington High School in Hawaii. Next one is a doctor. They all are very good Christians. Her mother is the superintendent of Sunday School. So when there was any conference on Christian Education, she came over here as a delegate.

Q: Were you able to find a good job in San Francisco?

A: Well, there were nice family. I stayed with an elderly lady for a while. In San Francisco I was confused about my future. I didn't know what to study. You see, I had to go to school, because I came here as a student throught the immigration Office. My status was exactly the same as a student from Japan. So for a while, I attended a Hills College, a business college, in San Francisco. However, I rea-ly didn't like it. I also thought about becomeing a dentist. I did come here in order to become an evangelist, but I became disinterested by that time.

Then I went to Los Angeles, because I had a friend there. I went there relying on his assistance. I was thinking about enroling at the Occidental College. However, you must have a cirtain amount of money to be able to attend that college. I did not have that money. I thought if I should begain to work as a domestic worker and worked for

a while and accumulated money. I thought about going back to Hawaii. Because I needed money to go to school, but I didn't have that money with me. I was very much troubled.

I came back to San Francisco and looked for a job. at an employment office. I got a job at a home on the Kennedy Rd, San Francisco. What I wanted to do was to accumulate a little money and go back to school. I began to go to church at that time and began to settle down in this country.

Soon, I became aquainted with a woman and subsequently we got married. It must have been 1938. I came to the mainland in 1933. We endured for a long time inthat house. You see, I came to the mainland with a big hope of attending a college, but by the time I got married, my hope for the future was completely different. I lost that big hope. I got married 6 years after I came here. Our bestman was Rev. Isamu Nakamura.

My wife was working at another home. So after we got married, she commuted to that house. She was cooking and doing all kinds of jobs. The man of this house used to owe a Jea House. It must have been around the World War I. Many white people who lived in this Pacific Grove knows about the tea house. There was a picture of the Tea House on a news paper a few years ago.

My wife used to say that the Pacific Grove is a very nice place to live.

Q: How did you get to know your wife?

A: I got to know her at this church. Her mother was also a very ardent believer and a member of thischurch. She was a secretary of the board. Her children(my wife and her brother) also became very ardent believers. He also became an elder of the church. At that time minister was Rev. Asano. He was the man who came from Japan. He is deceased now. Before that was Rev. Kawamorita. I did not have a chance to meet with this man. The minister before him was Rev. Kadoike.

Q: Did you have any residence of your own?

A: I used to live in a 2 bedroom guest house of the man whom I worked for. He did not use the guest house anymore, so he let us use it. When we got married, we lived in this house. My wife commuted from there to work. In the fall of 1939 we opened a restrant on the main street. It was very prosperous. Both of us worked and used about 6 caucasions. Reason was that 2 months after we opened the restraut, Fort Ord was opened. When they were building the Fort, Carpenters, plumers and electricians came to eat at our restaurant. So the restaurant did very well. When the Fort was completed, soldgers came to the restaurant, too. However, within a year and half the World War II broke open, so we had to close it.

Q: Was it a Japanese Restaurant?

A: No. It was a regular American Restaurant.

Q: Do you remember anything from that time?

A: Well, our business was very good. We saved some money.

Q: At that time you had children?

A: Yes, our first daughter was born. Our first son grew too large in her womb and was not successful in her delivery. Then the girl was born. There was a room in the back of the restaurant. The upstair was also attached to it so we rented it our.

Then the war broke out and we had to evacuate in the middle of February.

Q: Were you a member of Japanese Association?

A: Yes. There was a Japanese Association. I also belong to an Association called... Oh yes, "Heimusha Kai". We used to collect shiny candy ruppers (wrappers?) and made it a big balls, and send them to Japan. Some times we collected money to sent it back to Japan. I suppose it must have gone through the International Red Cross, but actually it went to Japanese Army.

Q: Were you a member of the JACL?

A: No. I wasn't. I was working everyday and I could not belong to it. However, my wife was a leader of the

JACL. It was before we were married. She was older than the most of Nisei. She was a very active leader of the church, too.

Q: How did you feel, when you heard about the news of Pearl Habor attack?

A: Well, I just could not believe that. After all everybody else was white people, so I felt very lonely and cold. Their attitude toward us before and after the Parl Harbor attack was quite differnet.

Q: Many solders were your costomers, but did they act any differnt?

A: No, they weren't especially differnet. However, civilians' attitude was really differnet. For example, some vacationing tourist would come in and upon discovering that I was an Asian, they left the restaurant. This was a frequent occurances.

Q: What was the name of you restaurant?

A: Crimson Art.

Q: Then people co-ldn't tell whether or not it was operated by a Japanese.

A: That's right. They had to come in to find out. They really took offense at the fact that Japanese attacked the Pearl Harbor. Soon there was a blackout, because there was a rumor that Japanese airplain was flying over California.

(a)

Q: Was there any harrasement by the white people?

A: No, not at all. It was just that people were really cold to us.

Q: How about the people worked in the restaurant?

A: There was no problem. There were those white people who asked us if they could do something for us. However, I felt very lonely. Because wherever I went I felt very vmall and was cold inside. I just couldn't believe in the beging about the war.

Q: Then you received a notice of evacuation, is that right?

A: I had two girls. May I say something about my family too?

Q: Yes, of course.

A: You see, I had 2 girls. After my wife died, my mother-in-law took care of my grils. She must have been over 60 at that time. My children were very small, 12 and 10, when my wife died. When my wife died, I had a small grocery store. When she died, I sold the Grocery store. I was thinking about going back to Hawaii.

Q: When did your wife died?

A: It was 1953, after the war. It was after we came back from the camp.

Q: I would like to go back to the time of Pearl Habor attack. Would you tell me more about evacuation?

A: Yes. My brother-in-law was an active church member and was an elder. His wife came from Hanford. When we evacuated, we went to Hanford, depending on my didyrt-in-law's family there. Then, we were sent to Fresno Assembly Center on the Next year. No, it was the same year. You see, we evacuated in Feb., 1942, and then we went to Fresno Camp in Nov.. I had one girl, then, In the next year, 1943, we were sent to Jerome, Arkansus. We stayed there till the spring of the next year.

Q: When you left went cost, what did you do with your restaurant?

A: We sold it. It was very cheep, but we had to sell it. We decided it over the coffee.

Q: Was there any problem when you bought the restaurant?

A: No.

Q: I heard many problems when Issei tried to buy houses.

A: Yes, I know about them because they didn't have a citizenship.

Q: You didn't have any problem?

A: No, because it had nothing to do with lease. I did not have citizenship, then, so I had to lease. My wife had citizenship, so she could buyit if she wanted to. In most cases, people leased it, you see, we didn't have that financial power to buy it. There were those who least it and made money, and then negociated to buy that property.

Q: Did you buy that restaurant before you went to Camp?

A: No, though we had the leasing right.

Q: How long did you stay in Fresno?

A: It wasn't that long. We entered Fresno Center around May. Then we went to Jerome, Arkansus, in October.

Q: Would you describe it to me the situation around that time?

A: It was war time, so we couldn't complain too much, but it was very hard. The train was a very old one. It wasn't modern trains at all. Food was OK in general.

Q: Did you work in Jerome?

A: Yes, I did. I was teaching English to Issei. I did the same when I was in Fresno.

Q: Did you work as a cook in Jerome? Isn't it you profession?

A: No, I wasn't a very good teacher, but I did teach English to Issei. The job as a cook at the Jerome was a very hard one. First of all it was very hot. Particularly in summer time, it was very humid, too.

Q: What did your wife to there?

A: She didn't do anyting. At that time I received $16 per month for my work. Most of the manual workers received $16.00. Lawers and doctors received $19.00 per month.

Q: Did you worry about the education of your children?

A: No, not specially.

Q: Wasn't your daughter about the age when she had to go to school?

A: Well, the older girl was only 3 or 4 years old. The younger one was born in Jerome.

Q: Do you remember anything special from Jerom? Sad thing or happy thing?

A: Well, you know it was the big community of Japanese people, so it was very lively. I don't recall any sad occasion. It was rather enjoyable. However, even though it was enjoyable, there was not much meaning or even hope in our lives. We were spending time day by day, somehow.

One thing I recall is that I always hoped that the war would end as soon as possible. Even though Japan might not win, they could conclude it with complomise.

Q: Was there any news of battles?

A: Yes. However, most of the news were just untrue rumers. It must have been from Japan. You see, we were not allow to have a radio at home, so there were those who listened to it secretly. So those news were coming from them. They never told us about the lost battles. It was always the battles that was won by Japanese soldgers.

For example, they said that Japanese torpido damaged propela of American ship and finally sunk it. It was the news of the battle won by Japanese ary or navy. There was never a news which were disadvantagious to Japan.

However, when Okinawa was invaded, the news did come through. It was the onlybad news that I heard from them.

Q: How did you deal with the question of loyalty?

A: I decided to be 100% loyal to the USA.

Q: When you were asked about the question, how did you feel about it?

A: I didn't feel any differnt or there was any bad feeling at all. The only thing I felt about being unequal was that you know they put us in the detension camp like that and then ask us if we were loyal to the USA. We were put through hardship. This kind of question has to be asked to the people who were treated equally and justly. So you see, many people felt that they were forced into saying "Yes" to the loyalty question. So on the one had this kind of questioning created registance among small number of people in the camp. Because the constitution of the USA presupposes the inocense of the people until proven guilty. However, this privillage was not applied for Japanese people. This is against the constitution. I really felt this.

Q: Was there others who felt the same way you did?

A: Yes, there were. So, consequently the answer to the question of loyalty turn out to very shallow and just appearance only. It was all decided not on the basis of real feeling, but on the basis of what would happen if one answered yes or no.

Q: Were there any one who answered "no"?

A: Yes, there were. There were many Kibei Nisei who said, "no". They used to get up about 5:00am in the morning and go through excercises (training).

Q: Did any officials complain about this?

A: No, they didn't. One Buddhist prist, who was also Okinawan from Hawaii, felt strongly about it and trained other Nisei, so he was sent to a Camp in the East.

In any case those people who said yes to the loyalty question must had the same feeling that I had. It couldn't be helped; that was the general feeling.

Q: Was there any problems between people who said "yes" and those who said "no"?

A: I didn't know personally about it, but I know there were lots of problems elsewhere. There were riots and violence, too.

Q: Did your wife have different feeling about it?

A: No, I don't think so.

Q: When you were in the camp, what happened to the church life?

A: There were churches in camp. Methodists, presbyterians, Episcoparians and other denominations were really not there. They all got together and had joint worship and ministers took turns to preach. There were Issei services in the morning and Nisei services in the afternoon.

Q: Were there many Christians in the camp? Were there more numerous than Buddhists?

A: Well, of course there were more Buddhists than Christians. However, there were more Chrsitians at the worship than Buddhists at their own services. The reason for this is that the many of the Buddists priest were in special detension camps, so there were small number of services and also people who were attending their service.

Q: Do you know the reason why so many Buddists priests were placed in detension camps?

A: Well, I don't know why. They must felt that Buddhists concepts are also too fascist. This must be the reason for the detension of so many Buddhist priests. However, it was very easy for Christians to hold services. They really allowed us to do most of the thing we wanted to do.

Q: I want to go back a little. When you were getting ready for your evacuation, did FBI come to see you?

A: Yes, they did. I must have been under their observation. I was at thedenger point of being detained. You see, after the war broke out, I sold the restaurant, and I stayed with my father-in-law. I heard that FBI came to see me while I was away somewhere. I was lucky that I was away. If I were at home, I might have been taken away by the FBI. The reason why I say is that the document of my statues as a student, (which proved my legal entry into the USA) was lost by that time. So if I were at home they could take me away. One more thing is that I was a member of Heimusha Kai, so this was also against me. I was the secretary for this organization.

Q: Was there any English name for Heimusha Kai?

A: No, I don't recall.

Q: How about your hobbies?

A: I didn't have any particular hobby. Because my children were small and if I were to go out, I had to leave my children by themselves. So I couldn't go out.

Q: When did you leave Jerome?

A: It was 1944, I think. It must have been before the Spring of 1944.

Q: Was it after the closure of the camp?

A: No, it wasn't. It was before that. You see, there was no

hope in our life in camp, so we left the camp before the end of the war in order to establish myself.

There were lots of rumers, like if you go out of the camp, you will be abused. So even though I wanted to go out, I hegitated for a while. However, when I left the camp, and went to Detroit, nothing happened to me. In the big cities they didn't care whethere I were a Japanese or Chinese. In the begining I went there by myself and then after finding the place to live, I called my family. It was very difficult to find an apartment. You see, lots of people from countryside came out to work. All the factories were hiring as many people as they could find. So it took me one month to find an apartment, even though I went out to look for it everyday. However, it was not a very good one, so my wife became a live-in domestic house worker. And from there I went to a factory and worked. It was a very difficult experience. It was a factory to make boxes to put tanks. It was a big factory. I was very impressed by the workers there. It looked like they were paid by the pieces and not by hours. I was very surprised. It was very difficult. We worked 10 hours everyday. We began early in the morning. It was a very hard work. A bus would leave before 6:00am. If I missed that, I had to wait till 9 or 10:00am. So I had to get up 5:00am or even before that. I had to walk to the bus station, too, in order to catch that bus. It was especially hard in the winter. It must have been about 10 minutes to the station and one hour of busride.

Q: When you came to Detroit, the war was not over, yet. But the people there treated you fairly.

A: Yes, they did.

Q: How was the pay at the factory?

A: Well, it must have been about $100.00 (per month). If I worked overtime, then it got up to $130 -140.

Q: How long did you stay in Detroit?

A: I stayed there about one year and half. When the war was over, my job was no longer needed, so I was laid off. I went to other factories looking for a job, but no factory was hiring any more. So I thought about opeining a cleaning shop. So I went out looking for one to buy. I found one, and we operated it untill we came back to California. A friend of mine, whom I came to know in Detroit, tought me how to operate machines for a day and a half.

Q: Was there any problems?

A: No, there weren't any. Except one time when I almost made a big mistake. I didn't know how to handle a fur coat. I thought about pressing it, but I decided to call this man and ask. He told me to drip dry it and brush it down. I almost pressed it down and damage the fur coat.

I was really glad that I called him, otherwise I could have made a terrible mistake. You see I didn't have much experience.

If you wash a pant ina water, it shrinks. I didn't know about that, so I just pressed it and gave it back to them. These pants used to come back often. There were many complaints about this, so I asked him how to do this. He said that I should measure it and then I could stretch it afterwards.

Q: How long did you have the cleaning shop?

A: I suppose I worked on it for about 2 years. I experienced many things. I just had only one day and a half training. In the begining I didn't know how to make a fire in the boiler for steam. So I had to ask a white delivery man to do it for me. Our kids were not dependable, yet. They were still toddlers, and my wife had to join me later. Yes, I had to have many bitter experiences. However, these experiences are all memorable incidents, now.

Q: Whould you please tell me an incident or two?

A: There was a very good woman in our neighborhood. She told me to send our children over to play with hers. There was also a young man who lived very close to the shop, told me that our children were lucky. He saw many Japanese children who had very little to eat after the war.

Q: Why did you leave Detroit?

A: First of all I didn't like the whether there. Then, It was very difficult to raise children there because they must have special shoes and pants and underwear. I myself don't like the cold climate, so I was really

bothered by the climate. Other thing was that the air was really poluted. White things got really black after you come home from the outside. So it was my dream to come back to California.

Q: When did you come back to California?

A: I think it was summer of 1946. We came back by train. My wife went to live with her mother in Mineapolice for about one month before I could call her back to California. So I came back ahead of them. I stayed in the church for about a week, till I was able to find an apartment.

Q: Then the church was a hostel.

A: No, by the time I came back, it was already closed. Many Japanese churches in the West Coast opened facilities for returning Japanese Americans as hostel.

Q: What did you do when you came back to San Francisco?

A: I did have some saving from the Restaurant and rooming business before the war. So I leased the upstair and lived there for a while. Then we opened a grocery store. It was the end of the year that we came back. Before that my wife came back, so we lived upstair of the former restaurant. This became a grocery store. There were three grocery stores in the neighborhood before the war. So I opened one of them. There was a man who owned an Oriental Import-Export company on the Broadway close to Seaside. So we received some merchandize from them, too. Out there 99% of stores are leasing. Very few people

owned their buildings.

Q: I'm truely amaized that you tried so many things.

A: In 1953 my wife died, so I sold the store to the owner of the Oriental Import-Export Store. I went back to Hawaii with my children. However, my children didn't want to live in Hawaii, so I came back to Carmel and opened Art store.

Q: How old were your children?

A: I think the older one was in high school. They didn't want to stay in Hawaii. When the older one graduated from high school, I sent her to Hawaii. Well, she liked Hawaii this time, so she decided to stay there after she graduated from her college. She got married afterwards. Soon after that I sold the business to my friend and moved over here.

Q: You must suffered a lot when your wife died?

A: Yes. Suffering and hardship has been with me all my life.

Q: Who supported you most?

A: It was my mother-in-law. Her son was in Italy. He soon came back, so I gave up my job in Miniapolice and came back. It was before my wife passed away.

Q: Do you have any advise for the young generation?

A: Well, Japanese American as a whole was rebuilding themselves, so it is very difficult to pay too much attention

to their children's education or for their future. I can't say we didn't pay any attention, but there were more pressing problems for us. All of us were really busy. However, we were oppressed from the begining of our immigration so we always had in our mind how our children might escape from experiencing the similar bitter experience as we did. Everyone of us felt that our children needed better education. So may children graduated from the University of Hawaii and came back to California and taught in San Jose. Soon she found a husband and got married. Her busband's parents came from Fukuoka Ken. There are many people in the East Bay who came from Fukuoka Ken. Her husband is an engineer. They live in Walnut Creek. His company is located nearby. They come over here 3 times a month and help me.

My second daughter lives with me and help me. Her husband is a caucasion. He works for a telephone company.

Q: What is your opinion of young Sansei in Colleges?

A: Well, they look like Japanese, but they are Americans inside. It can't be helped. I feel Japanese Americans should be earnest and study hard and live a straight life, but some of them have a very unbalanced and rough life. The environment makes them that way, but I feel they should be more earnest since they are Japanese. That's my wish.

Q: How many grand children do you have?

A: Well, I hope that thier life is earnest and serious. I read in newspapers that cirtain Nisei got a good and responsible positions. When I read it, it makes me very happy to read these good news. I suppose it is because I am a Japanese. I was very happy to read about the Mayer Norman Mineta in San Jose. It is because I am a Japanese. I don't know if a whiteman would understand me. But it's almost like a successful man coming out of my own family.

Q: Do you have any words for the young Japanese Chrsitians?

A: I do have some, but I also know that it would be very difficult to be realized. I am concerned about the future of Japanese American churches. I wonder if Sansei Christians feel strongly that they need Japanese American churches. I would think that theeven Sansei could relate to Japanese American ministers better than caucasion minsters. Even though they were raised here and educated here. They have many things in common. So as you say Sansei might prefer Japanese American churches over caucasion churches.

Q: Sad thing about us was that we could not be proud if being Japanese before the war. However, Sansei don't feel that way. They feel perfectly OK being Japanese. So Japanese churches might have a good future ahead of them. It's not that Japanese Americans are better than others. They are saying they are as good as the others.

A: I agree with you. As human beings, we are equal. I feel their attitude is healthy.

Q: Do you have anything that you want to say?

A: No.

Q: Thank you again for your contributions.